

The Advocate

Moving Our Office Forward— Together

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Shambra Mulder, Ph.D.

Office of the Ombudsman and Administrative Review

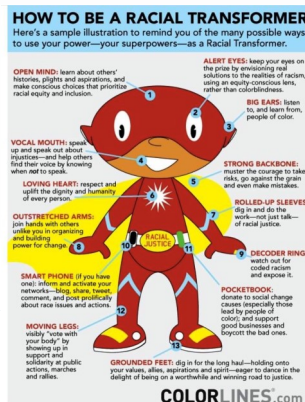
Thank you to everyone who attended the July 27, 2020 Staff Meeting facilitated by Rashaad Abdur-Rahman of the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (BHDID). That meeting was an important first step. We all earned basic knowledge about the diversity, inclusion, racism, and anti-racism. We also learned a lot about how BHDID began this work—including adopting their “Ten Statements of Commitments to Anti-Racism.”

OOAR's next steps are to form a smaller team of staff members to discuss and plan our work—possibly including statements that convey our commitments to anti-racism at the Office of the Ombudsman and Administrative Review (OOAR). This smaller OOAR team will include those who expressed interest, either through the survey or directly, in being involved. All are welcome to be a part of the team that will help us leverage the role of the OOAR to improve Cabinet services for all people.

It is important that the OOAR fully supports Secretary Friedlander's commitment to embrace Anti-Racism and address the chronic impact of racial injustices on our colleagues, communities, and families that we serve. This poster is a great reminder of that important goal.



Portrait Innovations Professional Services



Statewide Announcements:

in-person public school classes will hopefully resume September 28, 2020 due to COVID. By September 15, 2020, Kentucky plans to identify those students lacking internet students for Non-Traditional Instruction (NTI) access. Public school re-opening guidance is published on the KDE's website at <https://education.ky.gov/comm/Pages/COVID-19-Updates.aspx>.

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Word of the Month:

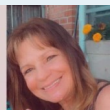
Inclusive— adjective

- 1) broad in orientation or scope;
- 2) including everyone. Especially allowing and accommodating people who have historically been excluded as because of their race, gender, sexuality, or ability.

(Source: Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

Employee spotlight:

Melissa L. Burgess



Melissa L. Burgess joined the Ombudsman's Office in 2017, as an Adecco contract employee. She now serves as an

Administrative Specialist III, with a long list of responsibilities.

Melissa is the Cabinet Administrator for CHFS Listens and assists her supervisor Sherry Carnahan with updates to the Ombudsman's webpage. She also assists with the COVID Inbox emails, is the training liaison, PPATS liaison, compiles monthly data related to response times from the Office, and performs many other duties—always with a smile on her face.

Melissa enjoys spending free time with Daniel, fishing, and loves her cats!

Special Report: Suffrage and Your Right to Vote

The free and unfettered right to vote is one of our most cherished freedoms. It was not always so. Male white landowners enjoyed the right to vote from colonial times. Black men were given the right to vote with the passage of the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (1870). Women, however, did not gain the right to vote until the adoption of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (1920). But "the franchise" as the right to vote was called, was not equally available to everyone. Southern states still managed to deprive African-Americans of their right to vote through intimidation, by passing "Jim Crow" laws starting in the late 19th century, and requiring poll taxes and literacy tests. The Voting Rights Act (1965) eliminated that. The 26th Amendment (1971) also lowered the voting age to 21 from 18.

The New York Times has a series of articles and photographs chronicling the Suffrage movement in the U.S. Here are some recent articles: <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/12/arts/19th-amendment-black-womens-suffrage-photos.html>; <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/08/17/us/suffrage-movement-photos-history.html>.

Nettie Depp, Educator and first woman School Superintendent

was recently honored with a statue erected in the State Capitol. See news announced by Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman at <https://www.lex18.com/news/covering-kentucky/state-announces-unveiling-date-of-nettie-depp-statue-first-monument-to-honor-a-woman>.



SUBMISSIONS INVITED —

Please email articles, ideas and items of interest to: carolyn.vose@ky.gov, with an email subject line — "Month, 2020 News-letter submission."

REMINDER:

Complete your LivingWell Biometric Assessment by Sept. 14, 2020 to save money on your health insurance premiums.



To schedule appointment, click on the link below: mypremisehealth.com.

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Expanded Voting Opportunities!

Kentuckians will now be able to: 1) vote in-person from Oct. 13 through Nov. 2, 2020; **OR** 2) vote in-person on Nov. 3, 2020; **OR** 3) request an Absentee ballot and either mail it back to the County Clerk's office or use the special absentee ballot drop boxes at your County Clerk's offices. To receive an absentee ballot **you must complete an application. Absentee ballots are expected to be mailed in mid to late September.** Click on this link to receive your ballot by mail: <https://vrsws.sos.ky.gov/abrweb/>.



Parents Helping Students at Home

For those feeling challenged helping students learning at home, here are some online resources to consider: Freckle, Grammarly, HippoCampus, Khan Academy, Mathway, PhotoMath, The Kids Should See This, and UnboundEd. Email me at carolyn.vose@ky.gov and I will send you an article explaining these and many other online educational resources, many of which are FREE!